



EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY (EPT)

For Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Trichomoniasis

FACT SHEET FOR PHARMACISTS IN MARYLAND

What is EPT: EPT is the voluntary clinical practice of treating sex partners of patients with certain sexually transmitted infections (STIs) without an intervening medical exam, if the partners are unable or unlikely to obtain a timely medical assessment. Most states authorize the use of EPT. EPT is endorsed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and many national and Maryland medical and legal associations.

Diagnostic criteria: Clinical or laboratory-confirmed diagnosis of chlamydia, gonorrhea or trichomoniasis.

EPT in Maryland: Maryland law authorizes physicians, physician assistants, advanced practice registered nurses, and certain registered nurses in local health departments to prescribe or dispense EPT for chlamydia, gonorrhea or trichomoniasis, within their current scopes of practice (Health General §18–214.1). Pharmacists licensed under Title 12 of the Health Occupations Article may dispense antibiotic therapy prescribed in accordance with the EPT law.

Delivery of EPT: Patients deliver prescriptions or medications along with informational materials to their partners.

Recommended EPT treatment regimen for partners (per current CDC treatment guidelines):

GONORRHEA, WITH OR WITHOUT CHLAMYDIA

Dual therapy:

- ⊕ 400 mg cefixime **AND**
- ⊕ 1 gram azithromycin orally in a single dose

CHLAMYDIA

- ⊕ 1 gram azithromycin orally in a single dose

TRICHOMONIASIS

- ⊕ 2 grams metronidazole orally in a single dose

EPT for Gonorrhea: The CDC no longer recommends the routine use of orally-administered cefixime for treating gonorrhea in clinical settings. However, oral treatment (via EPT) still should be considered since not treating partners is significantly more dangerous. The current recommended regimen for *in-office treatment* of gonorrhea is dual treatment with 250 mg IM ceftriaxone in a single dose PLUS 1 gram azithromycin orally in a single dose.

Filling EPT prescriptions: Prescriptions must be labeled with the partner's name, if known, and all prescriptions must indicate EPT or Expedited Partner Therapy. Unnamed partner prescriptions may be issued to EPT or Expedited Partner Therapy. Refills are not allowed.

Who pays for EPT medication: The index patient's insurance may NOT be billed for the partner's EPT medication. EPT medications must be paid for out-of-

pocket by the index patient or the partner, or paid by the partners' health insurance.

Educational materials requirements for pharmacists and practitioners: Educational materials for patients and their partners must accompany each prescription issued or medication dispensed, including: medication instructions; encouragement to seek a medical evaluation; adverse drug or allergic reaction warning; and advice to abstain from sexual activity as required during treatment. Materials complying with this requirement are available on the Maryland Department of Health's EPT web page for downloading at: <http://tinyurl.com/EPTMaryland>. Other materials with comparable information may be used.

Adverse reactions: To report adverse reactions, contact the Center for STI Prevention at the Maryland Department of Health by email: mdh.sticlinicalconsult@maryland.gov, or by phone: (410) 767-6900.

